
THE REFORMER.

Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth.—*Jeremiah*, v. 1.

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For the Reformer.

Stopping the Mails on Sunday.

Mr. Editor—The petitions now before Congress, requiring a law to stop the mail and shut the post-offices on first days, Sundays, or Sabbath days, throughout the Union, appear to be a proposition in which is involved three cases for consideration, viz—civil, moral, and religious. In a civil case, Congress has an acknowledged right; in that of morality, a partial right; but in that of a religious nature, no right to interfere.

They can stop the mail for one or several days of the week—they can oblige the keepers of public-houses to conform to certain rules and regulations during the whole week—but they are neither qualified, nor as yet, authorized, to legislate on the religious observance of any day of the week. The moment they attempt any thing of the kind, they assume inquisitorial power, and may as well endeavour to force or bring all their constituents to a uniformity of doctrine, faith, and practice—a stretch of power beyond whatever the Apostle Paul reached or preached—witness his own words—“One man esteemeth one day above another (day,) another (man) esteemeth every day alike,” and he leaves every one to act in such cases as he likes. But the same Apostle elsewhere intimates that *no one has a right to break the peace of society, or injure a fellow creature*. Now the travelling of a mail coach, or the delivery of letters, effects neither—not even on the first day of the week.

The clergy of this country having had, for some time past, but little influence in the councils of the nation, have at length matured and put in op-

eration a plan to bring the representatives of the people into a measure, which, *if carried*, would soon be followed up by other and higher demands, until the days of persecution *for conscience sake*, would be renewed, and “none permitted to buy or sell, but those who submitted to wear the mark of the beast.”

That this plan has been set on foot by the clergy, is obvious. The petitions, indeed, came to Congress in the names of the members of their respective congregations,—but was there an individual to be found who refused his signature, or that dared to cast off the reverence and fear, or divest himself of the sectarian spirit which had been infused into him by his reverend teacher?

The following extract from the 11th number of letters “*On the Millenium*,” published in the Glasgow Chronicle of 24th Sept. last, having a bearing on our subject, may be acceptable to your readers, and I must remark that these sentiments have arrived to us from a quarter of the globe where the *Press*, in regard to such matters, has always been, and still remains, in a measure, muzzled by the established clergy and laws of the land. Would it be deemed praiseworthy in this free’d country, to sit down and silently suffer the clergy, or our public servants to throw a chain across every highway, and at length upon our necks and consciences, every seventh part of our days? * H. I.

* Some years ago there was a law of the state of New York, that authorized chains to be thrown across the highways, streets, &c. to prevent travelling on Sundays. A chain at the then town of Schenectady, was broken by wagoners from Albany to the north. On the following Sunday the

From the Glasgow Chronicle.

"I would here ask those persons who feel a prejudice, or are ready to make objections, what is their authority, 'as Christians,' for keeping the Sabbath generally in any manner? It was no institution of Christ's appointment, and the observance of it is not enjoined by 'his precepts.' On the contrary, the Apostles, with the whole Church of Jerusalem, and under some express sanction of the Holy Spirit, decided this very question, among others, when they declared that the Gentiles were not bound by the institution of Moses. As to the common idea, that the primitive church substituted the first day of the week for the seventh, to be the Christian Sabbath, it is not only devoid of all positive evidence, but the presumption is strong against it. They were, indeed, in the habit of meeting together on the first day of the week, to celebrate the resurrection of Christ; and as none of the gospels had been committed to writing at that period, the witnesses and reporters of our Lord's actions and doctrines, availed themselves of such opportunities, to instruct the people, or to refresh the memory with the repetition of those things which it was the special duty of those witnesses to declare and to propagate. But this was a totally different thing from converting the whole day into a Sabbath like that of the Jews.

"The greater part of the first Christians were Jews, or Jewish proselytes, and continued to keep the Jewish Sabbath as well as the law of Moses in general. Can we suppose that such disciples kept two whole days in the

week as Sabbaths? As for the Gentile converts, many of them were slaves, and would not have been permitted by their masters to be idle for a day in every week, at their own pleasure—nor do we read of any persecutions being provoked or exercised on such account.

"Christ furnished us with an argument, in case we should feel in a dilemma on account of the previous positive injunction of the Sabbath by divine authority. 'The Son of Man was Lord also of the Sabbath,' and he did abrogate the Sabbath by this declaration, as the Apostles and primitive Christians must have understood when they taught that the Gentile converts were under no obligation to observe it. It then became evident, that whatever Christians might find it expedient and useful to do, in the way of adopting a particular day for religious worship and instruction, or for the purpose of rest, that they ought not to do it in the servile temper of the ceremonial law. The primitive Christians acted accordingly, and it was not for several centuries, and till after many new fangled rites were introduced into the church, in the temper, and after the manner of Jewish ordinances, that the first day of the week came to be regarded as a 'Sabbath,' substituted for the Jewish one. In those dark days of superstition, when men had saddled themselves again with the bondage of ordinances more grievous than those of Moses, from which the first Christians rejoiced to have been made free; in such days men might please themselves 'in a voluntary humility and will-worship, after the commandments and doctrine of men;' but they had no right to impose the new yoke on their posterity, after the times of reformation should come. 'Let no man,' says Paul, 'judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath.'

mended chain was again stretched across, and a posse of civil and church officers, backed by a number of indigent students for the ministry, armed with clubs, were posted to protect the Sabbath chain, and when sufficient reinforcements of carters had arrived, a battle ensued.

The legislature was then in session, and (having just become republican) immediately repealed the law.

"Now, when every man has a Bible in his possession, what is the use of haranguing the people every Sunday

to a wearisome length, as if they knew nothing about religion but what the minister told them. Why, every one of them that chooses to read, knows as much about the matter as his professed teacher. Is the Bible a sealed and mysterious book? Or is it a revealed word which every one may understand? If we adopt the first idea, then indeed Christ hath not published his gospel 'to the poor,' who in general form the mass of society, but to a certain privileged class. He has not completed the work of human instruction and salvation, but hath devolved a part of his office on those privileged functionaries. If we adopt the latter idea, the pretensions of those who assume such functions are baseless, and their long winded discourses uncalled for. It will be granted, that there is at all times need enough for men being exhorted to the practice, even of things which they do know, and that there is occasion to rouse the attention of the careless to consider the contents of the Bible; and in this manner, I would not make a quarrel with any moderate quantity of time which a gifted preacher might employ usefully, for such purposes; but the general practice is to spin out a certain time in order to pass away the Sabbath, by critical and controversial disquisitions on knotty points, or by obscure descriptions of experience, all of which things, it is presumed, the people do not understand; but which, it is evident, the clergy do not understand themselves, otherwise they would agree about them and be more intelligible. The truth is, that our public teachers could not contrive without these ingenious devices, to speak the requisite time, and thus it has become a custom or habit of the order."

IN SENATE OF THE U. STATES

January 19, 1829.

Mr. Johnson, of Kentucky, made the following report:

The Committee to whom was referred the several petitions on the subject

of Mails on the Sabbath, or the first day of the week, REPORT:—

That some respite is required from the ordinary vocations of life, is an established principle, sanctioned by the usages of all nations, whether Christian or Pagan. One day in seven has also been determined upon as the proportion of time; and in conformity with the wishes of the great majority of citizens of this country, the first day of the week, commonly called Sunday, has been set apart to that object. The principle has received the sanction of the national legislature, so far as to admit a suspension of all public business on that day, except in cases of absolute necessity, or of great public utility. This principle, the committee would not wish to disturb. If kept within its legitimate sphere of action, no injury can result from its observance. It should, however, be kept in mind, that the proper object of government is, to protect all persons in the enjoyment of their religious, as well as civil rights; and not to determine for any, whether they shall esteem one day above another, or esteem all days alike holy.

We are aware, that a variety of sentiment exists among the good citizens of this nation, on the subject of the Sabbath day; and our government is designed for the protection of one as much as for another. The Jews, who, in this country, are as free as Christians, and entitled to the same protection from the laws, derive their obligation to keep the Sabbath day from the 4th commandment of their decalogue, and in conformity with that injunction, pay religious homage to the seventh day of the week, which we call Saturday. One denomination of Christians among us, justly celebrated for their piety, and certainly as good citizens as any other class, agree with the Jews in the moral obligation of the Sabbath, and observe the same day. There are also many Christians among us, who derive not their obligation to observe the Sabbath from the decalogue, but

regard the Jewish Sabbath as abrogated. From the examples of the Apostles of Christ, they have chosen the first day of the week, instead of that day set apart in the decalogue, for their religious devotions. These have generally regarded the observance of the day as a devotional exercise, and would not more readily enforce it upon others, than they would enforce secret prayer or devout meditations.— Urging the fact, that neither the Lord nor his disciples, though often censured by their accusers for a violation of the Sabbath, ever enjoined its observance, they regard it as a subject on which every person should be fully persuaded in his own mind, and not coerce others to act upon his persuasion. Many Christians again differ from these, professing to derive their obligation to observe the Sabbath from the 4th commandment of the Jewish decalogue, and bring the example of the Apostles, who appear to have held their public meetings for worship on the first day of the week, as authority for so far changing the decalogue, as to substitute that day for the seventh. The Jewish government was a theocracy, which enforced religious observances, and though the committee would hope that no portion of the citizens of our country could willingly introduce a system of religious coercion in our civil institutions, the example of other nations should admonish us to watch carefully against its earliest indication.

With these different religious views, the committee are of opinion that Congress cannot interfere. It is not the legitimate province of the legislature to determine what religion is true, or what false. Our government is a civil, and not a religious institution.— Our Constitution recognizes in every person, the right to choose his own religion, and to enjoy it freely, without molestation. Whatever may be the religious sentiments of citizens, and however variant, they are alike entitled to protection from the govern-

ment so long as they do not invade the rights of others.

The transportation of the mail on the first day of the week, it is believed, does not interfere with the rights of conscience. The petitioners for its discontinuance appear to be actuated from a religious zeal, which may be commendable if confined to its proper sphere; but they assume a position better suited to an ecclesiastical than to a civil institution. They appear in many instances, to lay it down as an axiom that the practice is a violation of the law of God. Should Congress, in their legislative capacity, adopt the sentiment, it would establish the principle, that the Legislature is a proper tribunal to determine what are the laws of God. It would involve a legislative decision in a religious controversy; and on a point in which good citizens may honestly differ in opinion, without disturbing the peace of society, or endangering its liberties. If this principle is once introduced, it will be impossible to define its bounds. Among all the religious persecutions with which almost every page of modern history is stained, no victim ever suffered but for the violation of what government denominated the law of God. To prevent a similar train of evils in this country, the Constitution has wisely withheld from our government the power of defining the Divine Law. It is a right reserved to each citizen, and while he respects the equal rights of others, he cannot be held amenable to any human tribunal for his conclusions.

Extensive religious combinations, to effect a political object, are, in the opinion of the committee, always dangerous. This first effort of the kind, calls for the establishment of a principle, which, in the opinion of the committee, would lay the foundation for dangerous innovations upon the spirit of the Constitution, and upon the religious rights of the citizens. If admitted, it may be justly apprehended, that the future measures of government will

be strongly marked, if not eventually controlled, by the same influence.—All religious despotism commences by combination and influence; and when that influence begins to operate upon the political institutions of a country, the civil power soon bends under it; and the catastrophe of other nations furnishes an awful warning of the consequence.

Under the present regulations of the Post Office Department, the rights of conscience are not invaded. Every agent enters voluntarily and it is presumed conscientiously, into the discharge of his duties, without intermeddling with the conscience of another. Post Offices are so regulated, as that but a small proportion of the first day of the week is required to be occupied in official business. In the transportation of the mail on that day, no one agent is employed many hours. Religious persons enter into the business without violating their own consciences, or imposing any restraints upon others. Passengers in the mail stages are free to rest during the first day of the week, or to pursue their journeys at their own pleasure. While the mail is transported on Saturday, the Jew and the Sabbatarian may abstain from any agency in carrying it, from conscientious scruples. While it is transported on the first day of the week, another class may abstain, from the same religious scruples. The obligation of government is the same to both of these classes; and the committee can discover no principle on which the claims of one should be more respected than those of the other, unless it should be admitted that the consciences of the minority are less sacred than those of the majority.

It is the opinion of the committee, that the subject should be regarded simply as a question of expediency, irrespective of its religious bearing. In this light it has hitherto been considered. Congress have never legislated upon the subject. It rests, as it ever has done, in the legal discretion

of the Post-master General, under the repeated refusals of Congress to discontinue the Sabbath mails. His knowledge and judgment in all the concerns of that department will not be questioned. His intense labours and assiduity have resulted in the highest improvement of every branch of his department. It is practised only on the great leading mail routes, and such others as are necessary to maintain their connexions. To prevent this would, in the opinion of the committee, be productive of immense injury, both in its commercial, political, and in its moral bearings.

The various departments of government require, frequently in peace, always in war, the speediest intercourse with the remotest parts of the country; and one important object of the mail establishment is, to furnish the greatest and most economical facilities for such intercourse. The delay of the mails one day in seven, would require the employment of special expresses, at great expense, and sometimes with great uncertainty.

The commercial, manufacturing, and agricultural interests of our country are so intimately connected, as to require a constant and the most expeditious correspondence betwixt all of our sea-ports, and betwixt them and the most interior settlements. The delay of the mails during Sunday, would give occasion to the employment of private expresses, to such an amount, that probably ten riders would be employed where one mail stage is now running on that day; thus diverting the revenue of that department into another channel, and sinking the establishment into a state of pusillanimity incompatible with the dignity of the government of which it is a department.

Passengers in the mail stages, if the mails are not permitted to proceed on Sunday, will be expected to spend that day at a tavern upon the road, generally under circumstances unfriendly to devotion, and at an expense which

many are but poorly able to encounter. To obviate these difficulties, many will employ extra carriages for their conveyance, and become the bearers of correspondence, as more expeditious than the mail. The stage proprietors will themselves often furnish the travellers with those means of conveyance, so that the effect will ultimately be only to stop the mail, while the vehicle which contains it will continue, and its passengers become the special messengers for conveying a considerable portion of what would otherwise constitute the contents of the mail.

Nor can the committee discover where the system could consistently end. If the observance of a holy day become incorporated in our institutions, shall we not forbid the movement of an army, prohibit an assault in time of war, and lay an injunction upon our naval officers to lie in the wind while upon the ocean on that day? Consistency would seem to require it. Nor is it certain that we should stop here. If the principle is once established, that religion or religious observances, shall be interwoven with our legislative acts, we must pursue it to the ultimatum. We shall, if consistent, provide for the erection of edifices for the worship of the Creator, and for the support of christian ministers, if we believe such measures will promote the interests of Christianity. It is the settled conviction of the committee, that the only method of avoiding these consequences, with their attendant train of evils, is to adhere strictly to the spirit of the constitution, which regards the general government in no other light than that of a civil institution, wholly destitute of religious authority.

What other nations call *Religious Toleration*, we call *Religious Rights*. They are not exercised in virtue of governmental indulgence, but as rights, of which government cannot deprive any portion of citizens, however small. Despotism may invade those

rights, but justice still confirms them. Let the national legislature once perform an act which involves the decision of a religious controversy, and it will have passed its legitimate bounds. The precedent will then be established, and the foundation laid for that usurpation of the Divine prerogative in this country, which has been the desolating scourge to the fairest portions of the world. Our Constitution recognizes no other power than that of persuasion, for enforcing religious observances. Let the professors of Christianity recommend their religion by deeds of benevolence—by Christian meekness—by lives of temperance and holiness. Let them combine their efforts to instruct the ignorant—to relieve the widow and the orphan—to promulgate to the world the gospel of their Saviour, recommending its precepts by their habitual example: government will find its legitimate object in protecting them. It cannot oppose them, and they will not need its aid: their moral influence will then do infinitely more to advance the true interests of religion, than any measures which they may call on Congress to enact.

The petitioners do not complain of any infringement upon their own rights. They enjoy all that Christians ought to ask at the hand of any government—protection from all molestation in the exercise of their religious sentiments.

Resolved, That the committee be discharged from the further consideration of the subject.

[One of our Correspondents in remarking on this Report, says:]

Whatever may hereafter prove to be the fate of our beloved nation, or whatever success may attend the further efforts of the clergy, the report of the committee of the Senate, with respect to stopping the mails on Sunday, will reflect honour on that committee, and evidence to the world that we have yet in the halls of our legislature, men who guard our civil and religious rights with

a jealous care, and who can discover behind the hypocritical mask of religious zeal, the impious advances of ecclesiastical tyranny. It is observed in the Report, "*The committee would hope that no portion of the citizens of our country could willingly introduce a system of religious coercion in our civil institutions.*" I would ask, can it for a moment be supposed by an intelligent community, that the clergy are ignorant of the *real character of our Constitution*? Surely there is not an individual to be found who will admit this. Then have they not aimed a blow at its very foundation? And are they not thus, under the cloak of religion, the *deadly enemies* of those *rights and liberties* which our fathers prized above their lives? If such unequivocal language as is contained in the Report be lost on our citizens, our dearest rights are lost forever. We must submit our necks to the unhallowed yoke of clerical domination, or suffer whatever punishment they may choose to inflict—and the tender mercies of the clergy, when in power, have ever been cruel.

Let it not be supposed, that schemes so deeply laid, and so zealously pursued, are to be quietly abandoned. There are under currents which may, and will, no doubt, be resorted to. Congress is composed of representatives, and those representatives are chosen by the people. Hence it may be expected that means will be sought and pursued, in order to secure the election of representatives favourable to the views and wishes of the clergy. They have indeed already told us that the business *must be carried to the polls*; and boast of being able to "bring half a million of electors into the field;" yea of governing "*every public election in our country.*" But it is sincerely to be desired that the community may be awake to the machinations which threaten the prostration of what ought to be dearer to Americans than their lives—*civil and religious liberty.*

J. W.

[From the Philadelphia Album.]

Stopping the United States Mail.

Petitions and remonstrances have been forwarded to Congress concerning a stoppage of the mail on the Sabbath. The petitions have originated with some of the most affected among our religionists who, for the most part, care not a copper whether the mail be stopped or otherwise. They wish to be considered remarkably pious, and have therefore, in conjunction with a few divines, got up these petitions, and affixed their names conspicuously at the end of them. There are, doubtless, some who advocate this measure from motives purely conscientious. Let us for a moment inquire into the morality and utility of this matter. The advocates of this measure urge that in transferring the mail on the Sabbath, one of the commandments is violated and the holiness of the day rendered a mere matter of moonshine. But in contradiction to this doctrine, is not the transmission of the mail a necessary if not an indispensable act of duty? Vessels at sea, for they are the only European mails we have, would, according to these fastidious christians, be compelled to lay too on Sunday. If a relative should die on Saturday in New York, his friends could not convey the information to his kindred in Philadelphia before Monday or Tuesday. By this delay, it is probable they would be prevented a sight of the corpse, or from joining in his obsequies. Important documents and despatches of every kind would be ruinously delayed. A wretch might commit a murder one day, but in consequence of a proclamation with a description of his person not arriving in time, he would very possibly escape. But it is vain to adduce situations in which a law to this effect would be attended with consequences pernicious and detrimental to the welfare of the general community. Examples of its ruinous results will present themselves to the minds of every intelligent reader. Our legislators might with as

much propriety pass a law preventing a man to ride to church, to clear away the snow from his door, to prepare food, or in short any other matter of indispensable necessity. We believe the signatures attached to the remonstrances far exceed in number those appended to the petitions, and are equally respectable. Congress will in our estimation never pass such a law. It interferes with the immunities of a free people, and the slightest aberration from freedom of action especially when calculated to detract from the general interests and felicities, should be considered as a reprehensible attempt at schism.

Stopping the Mails on Sunday.

The *Telegraph & Observer*, printed at Poughkeepsie, N.Y. in speaking of a public meeting held in that place to take into consideration the attempts made for stopping the Mails on Sunday, says:

"The meeting was the most numerous and respectable assemblage we ever witnessed in this place on any occasion. It was composed of the business part of our citizens, of all political parties, and of every religious denomination among us.

"It is deeply to be regretted that there was cause for such a meeting; but the spirit and feeling which it evinced, show that the people of this country are jealous of every encroachment on their civil or religious rights, let it come from what quarter it may, and under however specious a pretext. It is well that it is so; for it is upon the intelligence and vigilance of the people of this country that their happiness depend.

"But upon what ground is it that the petitioners ask Congress to prohibit the transportation of the Mail on Sunday? Is it that any of their rights are infringed? No—it is merely on the ground of *religious faith* alone. This is a subject upon which Congress has no authority whatever to legislate—it would be an usurpation in them to attempt it, and their acts would not be

binding on the people. We feel confident that no Christian can wish for the interference of the secular power in spiritual matters—it is contrary to the very letter and spirit of Christianity.

"The experience of the past admonishes the people of this Republic against legislating on those subjects that rest alone between man and his Maker. Force never yet nor never will make a Christian or an honest man, but it has made an abundance of hypocrites, and brought true religion into disrepute. In this country, the framers of our excellent constitution have wisely separated religion from politics. It tolerates all religions equally alike; and while it protects all, it leaves each individual and sect free to present to the great Author of all Good, in their own way, the pure homage of grateful hearts. And if a man differs from me in opinion, it only proves that I differ from him, and there is no earthly tribunal that has the power of determining which is right in the sight of God: to his own master each must stand or fall.

"We are confident that if Congress should so far forget the duty which they owe to their country and the constitution, as to usurp power not belonging to them, and attempt to legislate upon religious subjects, in any way or shape whatsoever, that it will be firmly resisted at once by the people; and if persisted in, will eventuate in a civil war the most bloody and disastrous the world ever witnessed."

Among other resolutions unanimously adopted at the meeting, were the following:

"*Resolved*, That a high regard for the purity of our civil institutions, which have been established at such immense sacrifices, and a still greater reverence for that religion for which our fathers endured a cruel and unrelenting persecution, impel us to enter our solemn protest against any attempt calculated to connect *religious* matters with our *civil* concerns.

"*Resolved*, That one great and lead-

ing object in the adoption of the constitution of the United States, was to exclude or separate religion from the affairs of state; that the framers of that instrument, warned by their own experience and the example of other nations, of the baneful influence of such an unnatural union, determined that every man should be left free to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience; and we are unwilling, in such matters, that a majority, much less a minority as in the present case, should combine together to *compel others* to adopt their views and opinions on such a subject.

"*Resolved*, That we have witnessed, with the deepest solicitude, the attempts that have been made, and are still making, throughout the Union, to form, in the language of its authors and promoters, '*a Christian party in politics*;' that we view this attempt to prevent the transportation of the Mail on Sunday, as an entering wedge—a part of the grand system, by which it has been publicly avowed, they '*could govern every public election in our country*;' and that every public officer, from President down to a Justice of the Peace, was bound to be '*orthodox in his faith*.' And whilst we concede to many who are engaged in this grand project, honesty of motive and purity of intention, still we cannot but regret their delusion, and we feel bound to warn the community against those who, standing at the head of their profession, and seemingly unmindful of their high vocation, have publicly avowed sentiments of the most alarming character and of most momentous import to the friends of *civil and religious* freedom; and, in the language of a celebrated and venerable Doctor of Divinity, we are free to declare it as our belief, that '*unless they are soon arrested in their course, an ecclesiastical hierarchy will be established in this country, as oppressive and dangerous in its effects as ever was exerted by the Pope of Rome*.'"

PRESBYTERIANISM WHEN IN POWER.

Most of our readers must have heard of the "Long Parliament," in England, when the Presbyterians got the ascendancy, and after overthrowing Episcopacy, went to work to make what is called the "*Westminster Assembly's Confession of Faith*," and afterwards the "Presbyterian Directory," in which the form and manner of worship, of preaching, praying, psalm-singing, &c. &c. were accurately laid down, and all were required to conform. Year after year they were employed in making their "Directory" to bind men's consciences, in affixing pains and penalties for all non-conformity, and even death itself for what they termed blasphemy, while the more important concerns of the nation, or as it was then called, the Commonwealth, were neglected and unheeded. After sitting upwards of twelve years, Cromwell, although of their own party and faith, could bear with their fooleries no longer, and after giving them an honest lecture, by an armed force drove them from the house, had the doors made fast and put the keys in his pocket.—The following is the speech he addressed to them on that occasion, as copied from the *Delaware Register*, by which it will be seen what a holy set of men those were who were concerned in making the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, now the standard of orthodoxy among the Presbyterians in this country.

The Speech of Oliver Cromwell when he dissolved the Long Parliament, 20th April, 1653, after sitting 12 years, 6 months, and 14 days.

"It is high time for me to put an end to your sitting in this place, which you have dishonored by your contempt of all virtue, and defiled by your practice of every vice. You are a **FACTIOUS** crew, and **enemies to all good government**. Ye are a pack of mercenary wretches, and would, like Esau, sell your country for a mess of pottage, and like Judas, betray your God for a few pieces of money. Is there a single virtue now remaining among you? Is there one vice you do not possess? You

have no more religion than my horse—gold is your God. Which of you have not bartered away your conscience for bribes? Is there a man amongst you that has the least care for the Commonwealth? Ye sordid prostitutes! Have ye not defiled this sacred place, and turned the Lord's temple into a den of thieves, by your immoral principles and wicked practices? You who are deputed here by the people to get grievances redressed, are yourselves the greatest grievance. Your country, therefore, calls upon me to cleanse this Augean stable, by putting a final period to your proceedings in this house; and which, by God's help and the strength he has given me, I am now come to do. I command you therefore upon the peril of your lives, to depart immediately out of this place. Go! get you out—make haste—ye venal slaves, begone! So! take away that shining bauble (the mace) there, and lock up the doors."

Whether Presbyterianism in power in this country would be any better than in England, we shall not undertake to decide. At any rate, we should not much like to have the experiment made in our time.

PRESBYTERIANISM IN THIS COUNTRY.

"Dr." Ely, in a late statement "*Of the past and present condition of the Presbyterian church, with her prospects and wants,*" says:

"In 1704, or 124 years ago, the Presbyterian Church in the United States, was organized by the establishment of the Presbytery of Philadelphia. In 1716, or 112 years ago, we had one Synod and four Presbyteries."

Speaking of its present condition, he says:

"Two-thirds of all the Colleges, Theological Seminaries, and other academic institutions in this country, are under the instruction and control of Presbyterians. The Congregational churches of New England, and the Presbyterian Church together, have the charge of more than *three-fourths* of all these fountains of literary influence." He proceeds: "Our ministers in the state of New York alone,

are 448; and all the Protestant Episcopal ministers of all grades in the United States, do not exceed, according to their own estimation, 507."

As Corresponding Secretary and General Agent of the Board of Missions of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, "Dr." Ely, has drawn up a "Form of Subscription," to be signed by all who are willing to enrol their names, binding themselves to give so much annually as long as they live, or "as God shall enable them," to the Board of Missions of the Presbyterian Church. He says: "The aid of others we *solicit*; but that of the *communicants*, the Presbyterian Church has a *right* to CLAIM." He proceeds—"The Board of Missions earnestly entreats all who possess a ready mind to this work, to give their names to their pastor, their elders, or some of the agents of the Board, that the same may be enrolled under the following form of subscription:—

"The persons whose names are underwritten, belonging to the Presbyterian church at —, under the pastoral care of the Rev. —, have expressed their purpose, so long as God shall enable them, to pay to the session of the said church, on or before the 25th day of December in each year, the sums respectively annexed to their names; that the amount of this subscription may be paid to the Board of Missions of the General Assembly, as the annual contribution of this congregation."

After this a list is given of 113 names, so enrolled, in the seventh Presbyterian church, Philadelphia.

This is another of the new schemes invented in this day to get money under pretence of spreading the gospel, or rather Presbyterianism. How many more remain to be invented, time only can disclose. They all have one tendency—to enrich the priesthood and establish their power and ascendancy over the people. And at no distant period this power and ascendancy may be felt in a way now very little expected, and when there will be no possibility of obtaining redress.

"THE NETTLETON FUND:"

Or another Device to obtain Money.

Mr. Nettleton, (the "revival minister," so called from his qualifications, like Mr. Finney, for getting up revivals) it appears, is at present in Virginia. A writer in the Richmond "Visitor & Telegraph," (from the great popularity of Mr. Nettleton, no doubt) proposes to establish a fund, to be called the "*Nettleton Fund*," the interest of which shall be appropriated by the Directors of the Union Theological Seminary, for the benefit of that institution, in such way as they shall deem most conducive to its interests.

"In explanation of this measure," says the writer, "I would remark that Mr. Nettleton is a stranger in Virginia, and a subscription to this fund will be a *certificate*. Are there not friends and acquaintances, 'a great multitude,' who would be glad to bear testimony? They have only to enclose a bank note of any amount, to the 'Post Master, Prince Edward County, Va.' for the '*Nettleton Fund*.' There are many who feel themselves indebted to Mr. Nettleton, and they know not how to discharge the obligation—in this way it may be done."

What an ingenious trick to get money to train up more young priests, to make their fortunes by turning the Gospel into merchandise,—and in the end, subjugate and enslave this country! And yet the Editor writes an article in its favour. Says he—

"The object contemplated in the communication [respecting the *Nettleton Fund*] is one which will, no doubt, commend itself to the enlightened judgment of many christians. By the want of funds, the progress of the Union [Presbyterian] Theological Seminary is retarded. Although it is gradually rising, and gaining a stronger hold on the affections of the Church, and growing in favour with God and man, its usefulness has been, and is still, greatly circumscribed [by reason of not having more funds.] We state these facts, not on the authority or by

the request of the Board of Directors, but from a knowledge of the wants of the Seminary, and from a conviction that it is of incalculable importance to the temporal interests of the people, and to the prosperity of the church of Christ, in this part of our country, *that its resources should be greatly increased*. There are, at this time, we are informed, *twenty-seven* students connected with the Seminary. The object of the fund proposed, is to aid in furnishing the church with able, pious, and faithful ministers of Christ."

If any one wishes to contribute to the ruin of this country, by filling the land with such hireling priests as have ruined almost every other country in christendom, let him give money to these Theological Seminaries, and he will do it very effectually. How can any who have the least regard to the example of Christ, or the religion of the New Testament, lend their aid to such anti-christian establishments and manufactories of false prophets? For we say it in full confidence of its truth, that not a single priest will go from these Seminaries who does not intend to enrich himself by preaching for pay, and divining for money. Hence he can be only a false prophet, made by, and preaching for, MONEY—and will only be an injury to the cause of Christ and the souls of the people.

ANOTHER "NATIONAL SOCIETY"—PROPOSED.

A writer in the "*Philadelphian*," a Presbyterian paper printed in this city, says:

"The inquiry has occurred to me, why, amid all the benevolent excitement of the present day, when so many different societies have been formed for various good objects, and so well patronized and sustained, no effort has yet been made to reduce the *practical part of revivals* to a SYSTEM, as indeed the theoretical part is but imperfectly understood."

What men will next undertake, time

only can disclose. The writer proceeds:

"When we look at the operations of the Church, we perceive *national societies*, for home missions, and foreign missions, for the Bible cause, and the Tract cause, for the Sabbath and the Sabbath school, for the education of youth, and the preservation of temperance, &c. all sustained and honored by numerous flourishing and increasing auxiliaries, forming an unbroken cordon round the moral interests of the land, the force of which will be more and more sensibly felt as time advances—when, I say, we perceive this, is it not natural to inquire, is nothing to be done for the cause of revivals? Why is not the subject taken up practically? Suppose there should be called a general meeting of ministers and laymen, who have borne an active part in revivals of religion, to be held at Washington at some suitable time, (say after the meeting of the General Assembly) or in New York at the time of the national anniversaries. At such a meeting there might among many things be *transacted* such business as the following:—*The systematic formation of a Society for the promotion of Revivals*. Reports made by individuals of all the revivals in their respective regions," &c. &c.

The writer concludes as follows:—

"Let this subject be taken up by some of our leading men. Let, for example, some of the brethren in New York, whom I could name, or some of the brethren far west, or far east, for they are scattered throughout the land, talk this subject over, correspond, and come together at Washington, or at Philadelphia, or New York, in May next, and commence the work. If there be something NATIONAL in our revivals, let them be combined into the energy and stability of a *system*—let the holy impulse of a *national union* be applied to them."

"*System of Missionary Operations.*"

A Boston paper having remarked "that those who consider the present system of Missionary operations to be defective, should first devise a better system"—the *Baptist Herald* replies:

"*The BETTER SYSTEM* which we recommend, is in the eyes of the worldly wise, *no system at all*. It is simply leaving God's work, in raising up and thrusting forth gospel labourers, entirely to himself. We are strenuous advocates for the spread of the pure gospel, (which can be done only by those ministers whom God raises up) else we should not consent to endure the toil and suffer the deprivations that we do to publish this paper. We repeat what we have often asserted, and it is a truth, the force of which all our readers will shortly feel, that the present popular system of preaching and spreading the gospel is as contrary to the system pursued by Christ and his Apostles, as light is to darkness; that it is calculated to make hypocrites; and that by raising vast funds of money, which will one day fall into the hands of those priests whom its influence has corrupted and rendered base, our civil and religious liberties will be taken from us,—our pleasant fields will be taken for tithes—our children will become bond-servants, and our lives again subject to the terrors of the inquisition. We know our fears are treated by the multitude as idle dreams—but ponder a moment over the destiny of other nations. We seem not to be aware that there is the same liability to degeneracy now that there always has been; nor that money is still the *root of all evil*. The great body of the people have been lulled to sleep with the idea that so long as our spiritual guides, so called, *preach* up good works, there is no danger of their *practising* evil works. So thought the people under Catholic dominion, until their bands were made strong. * * * See you not, brethren, how the old serpent, in angelic form, twines himself around your tender offspring, whom

be calls the hope of our country. Little, says he, is to be expected from the men of this age who have grown up in sin, but by beginning with the youth and training them up to our views we may speedily bring forward Millennial glory!"

BAPTISTS IN ILLINOIS.

We have received a copy of the minutes of the "*Illinois United Baptist Association*," held on the 27th, 28th, and 29th of September last. The stand which this Association is making against the money-begging and anti-christian schemes of the day, shows that the Baptists in Illinois are yet able to distinguish between primitive christianity and the human contrivances & Jesuitical proceedings of modern times. We hope the Baptists in other places will manifest the same regard to their early principles and the practices of their predecessors—when the Lord alone was considered capable of calling and sending forth labourers into his harvest, and when no missionary funds were raised nor money offered to induce men to preach the gospel.

The following is the Circular Letter of the Association to the churches composing it:—

CIRCULAR LETTER.

Dear Brethren—We think it our duty to inform you that we are still opposed to the practice of those modern missionaries and supporters of theological seminaries, and the money-making schemes of the day, under gospel pretences; believing that theological seminaries are the invention of men, and have no warrant in the New Testament, nor in the example of Christ and his Apostles; for none of the Apostles, when called to preach the gospel, ever went to such places to be taught doctrine, rhetoric, oratory, or other human accomplishments; for Christ said, "my kingdom is not of this world," consequently, the foundation and support for its continuance cannot be money. We hesitate not to say, that the new fangled plan of Missionary Institutions, and the going out of missionaries, are made absolutely to depend on the monies which can be collected together; and hence, it will

at once appear that money is their foundation, and human schemes are the means employed in order to establish that foundation. If this be denied, let us resort to an experiment, and apply the only corrective that can successfully operate; for in this, as in all other cases, remove the cause and the effect will cease. Therefore, if money be the foundation and the cause of those Missionary Institutions, and the going forth of Missionaries, let the people withhold the *monied support*, and it will soon be seen that those institutions will *totter and fall*, and those well dressed *beggars*, who are travelling to and fro in search of *money*, will grow scarcer and scarcer, till the churches in Zion will be left to the care of those preachers who, like the Apostle Paul, are willing to labour with their own hands for support, and, instead of taking hire, could say, "Wo is unto me if I preach not the gospel." If this experiment of withholding money, were put into immediate operation by the people, it would, doubtless, answer the same purpose in this our day, as the "scourge of small cords" which our Lord made use of in his day, in driving from the temple those who "sold oxen, sheep, and doves, and the money changers;"—for, if once the money tables were overthrown, there would be found but few who would take their lives in their hands and go forth, saying, "I preach of necessity; wo is unto me if I preach not the gospel." We believe that the missionary spirit that is now abroad in the land, is the same spirit that pervaded the churches in the Apostle's day, and which he called the "mystery of iniquity;" and which, if properly nourished with money, will produce the same effects, will terminate in the advancement of the anti-christian religion, and strengthen that man of sin, who has exalted himself above all that is called God; and will take the reigns of government both of church and state in this land of freedom. The Prophet Micah, in speaking of these money-

hunting priests, says, "Hear this I pray you, ye heads of the house of Jacob, and provinces of the house of Israel, that abhor judgment and pervert all equity, they build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity." "The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money, yet will they lean upon the Lord and say, is not the Lord among us, none evil can come upon us." "Therefore shall Zion, for your sake, be ploughed as a field." The prophet Isaiah, in speaking of the same kind of people, says, "every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards." *Isaiah*, chap. 1, v. 23.

As the narrow limits of a circular letter will not contain all we might or would wish to say on this subject, we therefore conclude by recommending you to read the word of God with prayerful attention, and notice these things. And may the God of grace keep you from evil and error, and preserve you to his second coming, is our prayer. Farewell.

Extract of a Letter from New York.

"I have for the last year read the Reformer with much satisfaction, and hope you will be enabled still to go on the even tenor of your way, fearing not what man shall say. The longer I live, the more I see the prevalency of priests and their craft; for here in New York we can form no charitable or religious society, unless the priests have more or less to do with it, as if we were dependant on them for all our success. Pure religion, such as God approves, is at a low ebb, while the cloak and profession of it are every where and almost in every thing to be met with, except in visiting the sick, feeding the poor, and relieving the distresses of the widow and fatherless,—this is wholly neglected, except by a few who are hardly known among the religious multitude. But one consolation remains—*Christ knows them that are his.*"

RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE.

Christmas—Times change and men change with them. At this period, Christmas Day is religiously observed by numerous individuals, and by several powerful sects in our country—yet the following is an exact transcript from a law of the colony of Massachusetts in 1651:

"Whosoever shall be found observing any such day as Christmas and the like, either by forbearing labour, feasting, or any other way, upon such account, as aforesaid, every such person so offending, shall pay for every such offence, five shillings, as a fine to the county."—*Salem Gazette*.

It is said a similar regulation was made in Scotland. These laws were enacted out of zeal against the Papists, who considered the keeping of the day on which Christ was born, a greater evidence of devotion and regard to Christ, than keeping Sunday; but which our Puritan ancestors called superstition, and were not willing to allow any one to observe it. It has been the character of the New England Pilgrims and Presbyterians from the first to force peoples' consciences, and to bring the secular power to aid and coerce others into their measures and opinions. And if they were now to take it into their heads that the observance of a Sabbath under the Gospel, was only a superstition and a relief of Popery or Judaism, and had power, they would allow no one to keep it with impunity, however sincerely the person might believe it to be his duty so to do. This is a feature among the leading characters of the Presbyterian church that we feel no pleasure in exposing, but it is abundantly confirmed by facts; and we hope that this honest statement will tend to open their eyes to a better knowledge of themselves and of their duty as citizens of a free country, while at the same time it may induce others to guard against their attaining that power and ascendancy which at present they are so ardently seeking after.

[Communicated for the Reformer.]

Schultz's Range, Va. Jan. 3, 1829.

TO JOHN WESTFIELD, THOMAS STOKES, and KNOWLES TAYLOR—a presumptuous "Sabbath Committee," in the city of New York.

Gentlemen,—The last mail brought me your very presumptuous Circular of the 10th of December; for presumptuous it is for you to dare to dictate to Congress what course they ought to pursue in relation to us Post Masters on the "Sabbath day," when you ought to have known that Congress dare not legislate upon any of our religious duties, as you propose. No sooner, however, had I finished the perusal of your letter of instructions for my conduct, than I discovered the same *clown foot* of Presbyterianism in it that has been so long struggling after their clerical ascendancy in the state of New York, as well as Pennsylvania—But as they have been defeated in all their attempts to establish a "religious party in politics," in those great states, there cannot be a doubt that they will meet the same good fate in Congress, whom they are now about to overwhelm with their numerous petitions relative to the keeping the Sabbath day.

"As for me, I have no objections whatever to attend to the duties of my Post Office on "Sunday," or "Sabbath day," as well as every other day; for I am of the opinion that your Sunday or Sabbath day, in this age, is of no use except for those poor wretches who never think upon their CREATOR on any other day of the week; and of course, not necessary for those who are so far enlightened as to remember HIM every day alike.

"Yours, &c. C. SCHULTZ."

[From the Columbia Republican, printed in Hudson, N. Y.]

CHURCH AND STATE.

The effort now making, by petitions to Congress, by religious persons, to stop the transportation of the mails on the Sabbath, is one of the most bold and flagrant attempts ever yet made in this country to connect Church and State, and calls aloud upon every friend of religious liberty and individual rights to crush it in the bud. Under the auspices of what particular sect the subject has been brought forward we do not know; but we fear there are those among all sects who would, if they could, compel obedience to their own peculiar dogmas and opinions. Whenever Congress shall interfere, at the instance of such persons, or of any portion of the religious community, to enforce an obser-

vance of the Sabbath, we may justly anticipate all the evil consequences of a union between Church and State. The Government cannot interfere with the Church, and the Church should let the Government alone.

If the attempt in regard to the transportation of the mails should be successful, we may next hear of petitions against all travelling on the Sabbath or the performance of any other than church duties from the rising to the going down of the sun on that day; and after a while objections will be made to particular modes of worship, and some general national law prayed for, prescribing the true church, and the hours of worship for all sinners or unbelievers in the popular faith. One innovation will certainly be followed by others.

The Nashville Republican of Jan. 20th, says, "General Jackson, accompanied by some of his friends, left this place on Sunday evening last, in the steamboat Fairy, for Louisville, on his way to Washington City. Several hundred of his fellow citizens of this place assembled on the bank of the river to witness his departure and bid him farewell."

What will our orthodox priests say to this travelling of the new president on the Sunday!

The very able Report of the Committee of the Senate of the United States in relation to stopping the Mails on Sunday, we are pleased to find, has been printed in various places in pamphlet form, for more extensive circulation. A very handsome edition has been printed by James Lovegrove, No. 23 Calvert street, Baltimore; and another edition has been printed in this city by Mr. Marot, back of No. 171 Market street, at 75 cents per 100 copies, or one cent per copy. Mr. Marot has also issued proposals for printing the Report on a splendid sheet of letter-press, with an elegant engraved ornamental heading; size about 17 by 22 inches—price 50 cents per copy. It is designed for framing.

[Extract from the Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Illinois, Dec. 11, 1828, copied from the "Illinois Republican."]

"THURSDAY, DEC. 11. The bill for 'An act for the prevention of vice and immorality,' was read a second time, when Mr. Jones offered the following amendment to said bill, viz: 'That if any person, on the Sabbath or first day of the week, should attempt to disturb the peace or good or-

der of any congregation or body of people gathered together for the purpose of worshipping Almighty God, by offering to sell pamphlets or books, of any description whatever, or by begging money, or any other thing for the support of Missionary Societies, Bible Societies, or Sunday Schools, shall be fined in any sum not more than fifteen dollars, nor less than five dollars."

If we *must* have legislation on "vice and immorality," and on matters concerning religion, instead of enacting laws for stopping the mails on Sunday or the first day of the week, it would be better and much more conducive to the good morals and happiness of society, and the "preservation of our country," to have laws enacted to put a stop to missionary and all other begging of money, under pretence of promoting religion, and also for enforcing the command of Christ and the example of the Apostles in preaching the gospel freely. If our clergy wish so much to promote true religion, why not petition for some such measures? They would then manifest they were actuated by pure motives, and if successful, would do more to promote the cause of true christianity than all the hired priests and hired missionaries that ever existed.

[*Extract of a letter from Maine.*]

"There has been a great time in this quarter about dedicating meeting-houses. The Rev. John N. Maffitt lately dedicated one at Augusta and another at Gardner. It seems the Methodists are taking the same ground which they opposed twenty-five years ago. Popularity and grandeur seem to have gotten the ascendancy over humility and sincerity, in these parts."

[*From the Centreville (Md.) Times, of Dec. 20.*]

A very interesting scene was exhibited in the Methodist Church in Centreville, on Sabbath day last. Some of the old and conscript fathers of Methodism in these parts, determining on a secession from the church as at present established, explained their reasons therefor, and in solemn order signed their withdrawals at the altar. The scene was an affecting one and drew tears from the eyes of many.

[We understand that the number that withdrew were between 80 and 90.]

The Roman Catholics in this country are taking effectual and active measures for the general circulation of the Scriptures among all classes of their commu-

nion. They have now in press at New York, a stereotype edition of the New Testament, out of the Latin Vulgate, and intend, should their funds permit, to print the Old Testament. The principal reason assigned why Catholics have been heretofore so destitute of the Scriptures, is that they disapprove of the common version, and the version which they do approve not being published in this country, comes too high for the poor among the Catholics to purchase. Orders for fifty copies or more at a time, are to be furnished at 25 cents a copy.

An interesting publication entitled the "*Gleaner*," at one dollar a year, has lately been commenced at Wheeling, Va. edited by a female. The selections are judiciously chosen, and the editorial matter is written with ability. Females in particular would be doing themselves a favour by extending to it their patronage.

Mrs. Royal is about to issue from the press another new work, to be entitled her "*Pennsylvania*," which she promises "shall be a faithful mirror to reflect the virtues and vices of the heroes of the work." Terms, the same as her *Black Book*.

We have the satisfaction to inform the German population of this state and elsewhere, that the first number of the *Reformer* in German, has been issued at Lancaster, Pa. by the editor and publisher of the "*Lancaster Adler*," [in English, *Lancaster Eagle*.] The price one dollar a year. Those disposed to encourage it in this language, will please send on their subscriptions as soon as convenient, that the publisher may be enabled to proceed in the undertaking, and the continuance of the work may be permanently established.

American Sunday School Union.

In addition to the numerous agents and missionaries already employed by the American Sunday School Union, it is stated in their Magazine that "the Committee are exceedingly anxious to employ twenty or thirty more missionaries, but funds are wanting."

. Several articles intended for this number are necessarily delayed.

The *Reformer* is printed on the first of each month, at one dollar a year. Letters to be addressed and payment made, to T. R. GATES, Proprietor and principal Editor, No. 290, North Third Street, Philadelphia. Numbers can be supplied from the commencement of the work.